



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

### Virginia Employment Commission

Ellen Marie Hess  
Commissioner

6606 West Broad Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23230

Post Office Box 26441  
Richmond, Virginia 23261-6441

For Release: April 16, 2021

Contact: Benjamin Alpern, Economist  
Economic Information & Analytics Division  
(804) 486-2408 or (804) 786-8264

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### **The Virginia unemployment rate fell to 5.1 percent in March while total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 800**

**—Changes in these measures since April 2020 primarily reflect the effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and efforts to contain it. —**

**RICHMOND**— Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell 0.1 of a percentage point in March to 5.1 percent, which is 2.5 percentage points above the rate from a year ago. According to household survey data in March, the labor force increased by 1,618 to 4,238,239, as the number of unemployed residents decreased by 5,051. The number of employed residents increased by 6,669 to 4,023,563. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national rate, which decreased to 6.0 percent.

Virginia nonagricultural wage and salary employment, from the monthly establishment survey, increased by 800 jobs in March to 3,887,600. February's preliminary estimate was revised downward by 6,900, adding to that month's job losses. In March, private sector employment increased by 800 jobs to 3,185,400, while public sector payrolls remained unchanged at 702,200.

Employment rose in five of eleven major industry sectors and declined in five, with one sector remaining unchanged. The largest job gain during March occurred in **professional and business services** with an increase of 2,300 jobs to 768,600. The second largest increase occurred in **manufacturing** (+2,000 jobs) to 236,700. **Miscellaneous services** saw 1,700 additional jobs gained, increasing to 181,000. **Construction** and **mining and logging** gained 600 and 300 jobs respectively, rising to 206,300 and 7,100 in March.

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The largest job loss during March occurred in **trade, transportation, and utilities** with a decrease of 2,200 jobs to 653,400. The second largest decrease occurred in **leisure and hospitality services** which lost 1,300 jobs falling to 330,500. Other decreases in employment included **information** (-1,200) to 63,200, **finance** (-1,100) to 206,100, and **education and health services** (-300) to 532,500. Overall, **government** saw no change in employment levels in March, with state and local government each losing 100 jobs and federal government gaining 200.

### Nonfarm Employment in Virginia\* Seasonally Adjusted

Industry	Employment			February 2021 to March 2021		March 2020 to March 2021	
	March 2021	February 2021	March 2020	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>3,887,600</b>	<b>3,886,800</b>	<b>4,069,600</b>	800	<b>0.0%</b>	-182,000	<b>-4.5%</b>
<b>Total Private Sector</b>	<b>3,185,400</b>	<b>3,184,600</b>	<b>3,330,600</b>	800	<b>0.0%</b>	-145,200	<b>-4.4%</b>
<b>Goods-Producing</b>	<b>450,100</b>	<b>447,200</b>	<b>457,600</b>	2,900	<b>0.6%</b>	-7,500	<b>-1.6%</b>
Mining	7,100	6,800	7,600	300	4.4%	-500	-6.6%
Construction	206,300	205,700	207,200	600	0.3%	-900	-0.4%
Manufacturing	236,700	234,700	242,800	2,000	0.9%	-6,100	-2.5%
<b>Service-Providing</b>	<b>3,437,500</b>	<b>3,439,600</b>	<b>3,612,000</b>	-2,100	<b>-0.1%</b>	-174,500	<b>-4.8%</b>
<b>Private Service-Providing</b>	<b>2,735,300</b>	<b>2,737,400</b>	<b>2,873,000</b>	-2,100	<b>-0.1%</b>	-137,700	<b>-4.8%</b>
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	653,400	655,600	658,500	-2,200	-0.3%	-5,100	-0.8%
Information	63,200	64,400	68,700	-1,200	-1.9%	-5,500	-8.0%
Finance	206,100	207,200	214,100	-1,100	-0.5%	-8,000	-3.7%
Professional and Business Services	768,600	766,300	775,600	2,300	0.3%	-7,000	-0.9%
Education and Health Services	532,500	532,800	554,600	-300	-0.1%	-22,100	-4.0%
Leisure and Hospitality Services	330,500	331,800	407,100	-1,300	-0.4%	-76,600	-18.8%
Miscellaneous Services	181,000	179,300	194,400	1,700	0.9%	-13,400	-6.9%
<b>Government</b>	<b>702,200</b>	<b>702,200</b>	<b>739,000</b>	0	<b>0.0%</b>	-36,800	<b>-5.0%</b>
Federal Government	186,800	186,600	185,500	200	0.1%	1,300	0.7%
State Government	155,300	155,400	162,700	-100	-0.1%	-7,400	-4.5%
Local Government	360,100	360,200	390,800	-100	0.0%	-30,700	-7.9%

\*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

From March 2020 to March 2021, the VEC estimates that establishments in Virginia lost 182,000 jobs, a decrease of 4.5%. In March, the private sector recorded an over-the-year loss of 145,200 jobs, while employment in the public sector lost 36,800 jobs.

Compared to a year ago, on a **seasonally adjusted** basis, all eleven major industry divisions experienced employment decreases. The largest over-the-year job loss occurred in **leisure and hospitality**, down 76,600 jobs (-18.8%). The next largest over-the-year job loss occurred in **government**, down 36,800 jobs (-5.0%). Within government, there were decreases in local government employment

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(-30,700 jobs) and state government employment (-7,400 jobs). Federal government experienced an increase in employment (+1,300 jobs). **Education and health services** experienced the third largest over-the-year job loss of 22,100 jobs (-4.0%). **Miscellaneous services** employment declined by 13,400 jobs (-6.9%). **Finance** lost 8,000 jobs (-3.7%) while **professional and business services** lost 7,000 jobs (-0.9%). Other losses were in **manufacturing**, down 6,100 jobs (-2.5); **information**, down 5,500 jobs (-8.0%); **trade and transportation**, down 5,100 jobs (-0.8%); **construction** down 900 jobs (-0.4%); and **mining** down 500 jobs (-6.6%).

### Total Nonfarm Employment in Virginia\* Seasonally Adjusted

Area	Employment			February 2021 to March 2021		March 2020 to March 2021	
	March 2021	February 2021	March 2020	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
<b>Virginia</b>	<b>3,887,600</b>	<b>3,886,800</b>	<b>4,069,600</b>	800	0.0%	-182,000	-4.5%
<b>Blacksburg-Christiansburg- Radford MSA</b>	75,600	75,100	77,700	500	0.7%	-2,100	-2.7%
<b>Charlottesville MSA</b>	113,000	111,900	121,000	1,100	1.0%	-8,000	-6.6%
<b>Harrisonburg MSA</b>	66,700	66,400	69,500	300	0.5%	-2,800	-4.0%
<b>Lynchburg MSA</b>	99,800	100,000	105,600	-200	-0.2%	-5,800	-5.5%
<b>Northern Virginia MSA</b>	1,462,400	1,456,800	1,533,200	5,600	0.4%	-70,800	-4.6%
<b>Richmond MSA</b>	650,300	650,400	689,200	-100	0.0%	-38,900	-5.6%
<b>Roanoke MSA</b>	156,400	156,100	162,700	300	0.2%	-6,300	-3.9%
<b>Staunton-Waynesboro MSA</b>	50,900	50,900	51,500	0	0.0%	-600	-1.2%
<b>Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, Virginia/North Carolina MSA</b>	763,700	765,600	796,200	-1,900	-0.2%	-32,500	-4.1%
<b>Winchester, Virginia/West Virginia MSA</b>	66,600	66,400	66,800	200	0.3%	-200	-0.3%

\*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

**Seasonally adjusted** total nonfarm employment data is produced for ten metropolitan areas. In March, six metropolitan areas experienced over-the-month job gains, three experienced losses over-the-month, and one experienced no over-the-month change. The largest absolute job increase occurred in Northern Virginia (+5,600 jobs). The next largest absolute job gain occurred in Charlottesville (+1,100 jobs). The third largest increase occurred in Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (+500 jobs). Harrisonburg and Roanoke each added 300 jobs over the month. Winchester added 200 jobs over-the-month. Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News experienced the largest absolute job loss, losing 1,900 jobs. Other over-the-month job losses occurred in Lynchburg (-200 jobs) and Richmond (-100 jobs). Finally, Staunton-Waynesboro recorded no change in jobs over-the-month.

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Over-the-year, **seasonally adjusted** total nonfarm employment decreased in all ten metropolitan areas. The Northern Virginia metropolitan area experienced the largest absolute job loss, down 70,800 jobs (-4.6%). Richmond ranked second, with a loss of 38,900 jobs (-5.6%). Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News ranked third with a decline of 32,500 jobs (-4.1%). Other over-the-year job losses occurred in Charlottesville (-8,000 jobs), Roanoke (-6,300 jobs), Lynchburg (-5,800 jobs), Harrisonburg (-2,800 jobs), Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (-2,100 jobs), Staunton-Waynesboro (-600 jobs), and Winchester (-200 jobs).

## NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA

Virginia's **unadjusted** unemployment rate fell by 0.3 of a percentage point in March to 5.1 percent, and was up 2.3 percentage points from a year ago. Compared to a year ago, the number of unemployed increased by 94,681, household employment decreased by 281,861, and the labor force decreased by 187,180. Virginia's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national unadjusted rate, which fell by 0.4 percentage points in March to 6.2 percent.

Compared to last month, the March unadjusted workweek for Virginia's 159,100 manufacturing production workers increased by 1.0 hours to 41.9 hours. Average hourly earnings of private-sector production workers decreased by \$.05 to \$21.06 in March and average weekly earnings increased \$19.01 to \$882.41.

Technical note: Estimates of unemployment and industry employment levels are obtained from two separate monthly surveys. Resident employment and unemployment data are mainly derived from the Virginia portion of the national Current Population Survey (CPS), a household survey conducted each month by the U.S. Census Bureau under contract with BLS, which provides input to the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program (often referred to as the "household" survey). Industry employment data is mainly derived from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey, a monthly survey of approximately 18,000 Virginia businesses conducted by BLS, which provides estimates of employment, hours, and earnings data broken down by industry for the nation as a whole, all states and most major metropolitan areas (often referred to as the "establishment" survey). Both industry and household estimates are revised each month based on additional information from updated survey reports compiled by the BLS. **For national figures and information on how COVID-19 affected collection of the BLS establishment and household surveys in March, refer to the BLS [March 2021 Employment Situation](#) press release for details.**

*The statistical reference week for the household survey this month was the week of March 7-13, 2021.*

The Virginia Employment Commission plans to release the March local area unemployment rates on Wednesday, April 28, 2021. The data will be available on our website [www.VirginiaWorks.com](http://www.VirginiaWorks.com). The April statewide unemployment rate and employment data for both the state and metropolitan areas are scheduled to be released on Friday, May 21, 2021.